WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A system for positively identifying a client machine running a client application to a backend, comprising

executing a ClientID storage process, including

5   upon connection by the client application to the backend, generating a unique ClientID containing a checksum at the backend for the client machine,

sending the ClientID to the client application,

reversibly scrambling the ClientID with the client application at the client machine and storing a first scrambled version of the ClientID at a first predetermined

10   location on the client machine, and

reversibly scrambling the ClientID with the client application at the client machine and storing a second scrambled version different from the first version of the ClientID at a second predetermined location on the client machine.

2. The system of claim 1, further comprising executing a ClientID retrieval process

15   with the client application when the client application subsequently attempts to connect to the backend, including

retrieving and unscrambling the values stored in both locations using the first and second keys,

running a checksum operation on the unscrambled values to verify that each

20   has the correct checksum, and

comparing the two unscrambled values to see whether they match.

2. The system of claim 2, wherein the retrieval process executed by the client application further comprises

if the two unscrambled values retrieved from the two locations have the

25   correct checksum and match each other, reporting the retrieved ClientID to the backend.

3. The system of claim 3, wherein the retrieval process executed by the client application further comprises

if the two unscrambled values retrieved from the two locations do not both

30   have the correct checksum and match each other, reporting an error to the backend.

4. The system of claim 1, wherein the storage process further comprises encrypting the value of the newly generated ClientID at the backend and storing the encrypted version of the ClientID on the backend in a ClientID record.

5. The system of claim 1, wherein the storage process steps of scrambling use different first and second keys.

6. The system of claim 1, wherein one of the first and second locations is the registry.

7. The system of claim 1, wherein one of the first and second locations is the system configuration file.

8. The system of claim 1, wherein the first and second locations are the registry and system configuration file.